

Fire Safety Learning Briefing 2022

Introduction

The purpose of this briefing is to communicate to all LSAB partner agencies the key learning from the fire deaths and near miss incidents reviewed by the 4LSAB Fire Safety Development Group (FSDG) which were identified over a 12 month period (April 2021-March 2022).

The role of the FSDG is to co-ordinate fire prevention work across the 4LSAB area. The group aims to ensure fire safety and risk management is embedded into the day to day work of partners. The Group also maintains oversight of fire incidents resulting in fire related serious injuries and deaths involving adults with care and support needs.

Partner agencies are required to review the identified learning, consider their own agency procedures, ensure this learning is fully embedded within their organisations and to develop internal mechanisms to identify, support and effectively manage fire risk for all individuals across the 4LSAB areas.

Learning from 4LSAB Fire Safety Development Group Case Reviews (cases 30-44)

Multi Agency Risk Management

- The 4LSAB Multi Agency Risk Management (MARM) Procedure should be applied in cases of ongoing high fire risks to ensure a joined up multi-agency approach.
- The 4LSAB Multi Agency Risk Management process should still progress if not all agencies are able to attend the meetings as information can still be shared and the individual of concern can benefit from the process.
- The 4LSAB Multi Agency Risk Management process should only be explored when Statutory Section 42 (S42) thresholds have not been met – the possibility of a Section 42 enquiry should be considered before a MARM is started

Agency training needs / knowledge

- All care agencies included those providing privately funded care to individuals must have an understanding of fire risks and vulnerabilities and have an assessment of fire risk embedded within the care plans.
- All care agencies included those providing privately funded care to individuals must be aware of the Safe and Well visits available from Hampshire and IOW Fire and Rescue Service.
- All agencies across the 4LSAB need to be aware that Safe and Well Visits can be offered to individuals residing in Supported Housing or Extra Care Housing.
- All agencies across the 4LSAB area must have an awareness of the 4LSAB Multi Agency Fire Safety Framework, including an awareness of fire risks and vulnerabilities and the need to consider safe and well referrals
- Targeted work and training for GPs across the 4LSAB area is required to ensure they can recognise fire risks and vulnerabilities and that GPs make referrals to HIWFRS for Safe and Well visits
- All 4LSAB partner agencies should consider accessing free training opportunities available from HIWFRS in order to increase their agencies understanding of fire vulnerability and to enable effective fire risk management practices to be embedded within their own internal policies and procedures

Partner agency processes

- Professionals who intend to submit referrals for prevention and early intervention activities to other agencies must check that the referral has been submitted and ensure this referral is clearly recorded on an individual's case file.
- Agencies must be aware of and recognise individuals who are in a 'cycle' of being discharged from hospitals back into high risk environments without any risk management arrangements being in place. Agencies must work to break the cycle and ensure all agencies are aware of the presenting risks.
- Agencies must ensure they have a consistent approach to identifying and managing fire risks for all their patients / service users / residents.
- Hospitals need to ensure they have a method of gathering data from different departments and on previous admissions to ensure a holistic understanding of the situation and the presenting fire risk.
- Agencies must be aware of their own processes and whether an individual's reluctance or difficulty to engage has impacted upon the Services or support that is offered to them. If so, reflection must be given as to whether the services or support offered is still sufficient and effective to reduce the presenting risk.

Fire Risk Management

- Fire risks and the associated control measures must be embedded within care plans to ensure risks are regularly monitored and reviewed.
- Agencies and professionals who have ongoing contact with an individual are vital in monitoring risks and embedding control measures. Repeat Safe and Well Visits are not the solution on their own without ongoing monitoring and control measures being embedded.
- The impact that an individual's fire risk is having on any neighbouring properties or other individuals must be assessed by agencies. The individual's understanding and consideration of the impact of the risk on others must also be assessed.
- Family and friends who are caring for someone must be made aware of fire risks and vulnerabilities and the offer of a Safe and Well visit.
- A re-referral to HIWFRS for another Safe and Well visit is required when an individual's circumstances change, particularly when an increase in an individual's fire vulnerability is being identified.
- Any individual who is unable to self-evacuate their property must have a fire risk assessment completed.
- Alcohol use and the impact of this must always be considered when making decisions about an individual's ability to protect themselves in a fire situation
- The effective management and implementation of fire safety control measures (i.e testing smoke detection, ensuring detection is in the right location, using fire retardant bedding) and knowledge of fire risks must be 'handed over' between agencies when involvement from one agency stops and another becomes involved.

Fire safety control measures

- Fire safety control measures such as fire retardant bedding are unable to be enforced. Carers, professionals and family can only encourage their use. If a care plan is in place this encouragement must be included in care plans.
- Fire retardant bedding cannot be the default intervention for someone who is demonstrating carelessness with smoking materials. Other mechanisms of safe smoking may need to be considered – i.e sand buckets / vaping / smoking under supervision. In all cases where carelessness with smoking materials is identified and the person is in receipt of care and support Services, a Safe smoking risk assessment should be completed and reviewed for effectiveness.
- For individuals presenting ongoing fire risks of alcohol / smoking / mobility, misting systems should be considered and explored as a control measure

What to do if you are concerned for a person's safety due to fire risks

- Complete a Fire Risk Assessment as outlined within the [4LSAB Multi-Agency Fire Safety Framework](#).
- [Refer to Hampshire and IOW Fire and Rescue Service for Safe and Well interventions](#). Partner agencies can make a direct referral for Safe and Well intervention across the Hampshire, IOW, Portsmouth and Southampton areas through completing the online referral form.
- Consider implementing the [Multi Agency Risk Management Framework](#)
- Follow the guidance and support detailed within the [4LSAB Hoarding Guidance](#)
- Management of Fire Risk training is available for all frontline practitioners and agencies from Hampshire and IOW Fire and Rescue Service. To request this training, agencies should email community.firesafety@hantsfire.gov.uk